

OUR FEATHERED FRIENDS

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This is a test of your ability to perceive wholes within larger wholes - to recognize linguistic structures embedded within greater linguistic structures. The linguistic structures employed are words and two-word terms, typically dictionary entries.

Word Ways has neglected our feathered friends, the birds of the world, much too long. This test rectifies that oversight by focusing exclusively on names of birds. Consider, for example, the word THRONE. Look at it perceptively enough, and you discover that a HERON lies concealed within it. Or, take the word OPINES. Investigation soon discloses that it harbors a SNIPE. Yet again, study the word RANKED. Soon, a DRAKE emerges to gratify you.

Listed below are 50 words and phrases. Each one is capable of yielding at least one of our feathered friends. Your job is to flush them out of their cozy hiding places.

Note that 7 of the 50 clues have the superscript "1" attached to them. Each of these 7 clues has two different bird names ensconced within it, with each of the two names only one letter shorter than the clue. You owe it to yourself to find both solutions in each case.

Note further that another 7 clues have the superscript "2" attached to them. Each of the single birds in these clues claims to be something that it is not. What does it claim to be? What is it in actuality? Your job is to establish the facts!

With one exception, all of the answer words are Websterian, to be found in the 2nd and/or 3rd Edition of Webster's Unabridged. The sole exception is the solution to clue number 17 - a word taken from the Funk & Wagnalls Unabridged, because of its considerable incidental interest.

There were many possible ways of arranging the transadditions acting as clue words. Torn by indecision concerning the most logical order to use, I finally settled on arranging the clues in simple alphabetic order. I assumed that this order would present the problems in random order as far as difficulty is concerned. When I examined the result, I was astonished to find that the four outstandingly most difficult problems - numbers 6, 10, 14 and 15 - were all in the first third of the list. Random ordering does, as this result demonstrates, sometimes produce such inequities.

Now that I have identified the toughest problems for you, two

options are open to you. On the one hand, you may take the easy way out and skip these four problems entirely, making not even token efforts to solve them. On the other hand, you can steel yourself and resolve to tackle the problems in strict numerical order, never proceeding to the next one until the preceding one lies prostrate at your feet. Which course are you going to adopt - the heroic or the craven one? (Note, parenthetically, that CRAVEN is a transposal of CAVERN, the number 16 clue word.)

The problems are a mixture of easy, medium, difficult and very difficult ones. As for the transadditions, some of them are intended to expand your mental vistas. Think, for instance, about LION EGGS, a SEMITUTOR, and NIGEL'S NADIR. You may, of course, say PHOOOEY! to all of them. Please don't: they signify cosmic truths.

Your Test

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| 1. A CYRANO | 26. HEPTANE |
| 2. AGNOSTIC | 27. ICE PLANT |
| 3. A LEDGE ¹ | 28. IMPAGES ¹ |
| 4. A LEGIBLE AD | 29. INTEGRALS |
| 5. ALMONDS ² | 30. I ROVED ¹ |
| 6. ALUMINIAL | 31. LION EGGS |
| 7. ANGELIC THING | 32. NEAT GARB |
| 8. A REPORT | 33. NIGEL'S NADIR |
| 9. A RICELAND | 34. ODD ORANGES ² |
| 10. A ROCHESTER ² | 35. OPENING |
| 11. BORDERING ² | 36. O REALITIES! |
| 12. BRAWLERS | 37. PHOOOEY! |
| 13. BROAD KEGS | 38. REOWING |
| 14. CALIFORNIA | 39. RUBBLE? DIG! |
| 15. CALIFORNIAN | 40. SEMITUTOR ² |
| 16. CAVERN ¹ | 41. SH, TORERO! |
| 17. COOPERING ² | 42. STEAMIER |
| 18. DANGERS | 43. STORELIKE |
| 19. DRAINPIPES | 44. THEORICS |
| 20. EGBERT ¹ | 45. TO REOIL ¹ |
| 21. ENDOWING | 46. WAR CORPS |
| 22. FERRET OUT | 47. WAR EVES |
| 23. GNATLIKE | 48. WAR SCOUTS |
| 24. GREAT PRIDE | 49. WOLF APES ¹ |
| 25. HARMONIES ² | 50. WOLFLET |